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SIPDIS

FROM USMISSION UNESCO PARIS  
FOR IO/T, IO/S, L/UNA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ABUD](#) [FR](#) [UNESCO](#)

SUBJECT: USUNESCO: UNESCO ADOPTS PROGRAM AND BUDGET  
FOR 2006-07. US VOTES NO.

1. Summary: The United States voted against adoption of the 2006-07 Program and Budget for the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The budget was adopted by vote, 126 in favor, 1 against (US), with no abstentions. In explaining the U.S. vote, Ambassador Oliver, U.S. Permanent Representative to UNESCO, said that this budget does not sufficiently move funds away from ineffective activities toward effective program and activities. Furthermore, this budget includes funding for the promotion and implementation of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. End Summary.

2. On October 21, the Plenary of the UNESCO General Conference convened in order to adopt the draft Program and Budget for 2006-07. The Vice Chair (Japan) of the Administrative Commission provided an oral report of the meeting of the Commission in which the Commission recommended that the Plenary adopt the draft Program and Budget. In his report, the Vice Chair noted that one delegation had referenced a previous objection to the budget as adopted by Commission IV (Culture). The Vice Chair, who had previously appealed to the U.S. to avoid a vote on the budget, stressed in his oral report the importance of adopting the budget by consensus. Before the vote, the Ambassador of Japan noted that the vote should not be seen as a precedent for future Conferences.

3. The program and budget was then adopted by the Conference by vote, 126 in favor, 1 against (US), with no abstentions. The United States took the floor to explain that the U.S. vote against the budget was the result of the failure of this budget, despite months of effort, to adequately move funds away from ineffective activities. Moreover, this budget includes funding for the implementation of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. The solemn mood of the meeting was then broken by an intervention from Cuba, which stated that the UNESCO had done well during the time that the United States was not a member. Now that the United States has returned to UNESCO, the Cuban delegation continued, it should be more prepared to join other delegations in their work at UNESCO and to change its conduct. He further claimed (inaccurately) that the United States is \$75.2 million in arrears. This intervention was followed by loud applause from the room. Notably, Canada, Russia, the EU states, and Australia, plus a few others, did not join the applause. The Secretary of the General Conference, several EU countries and Caribbean states came up to the U.S. delegation afterwards to apologize for the Cuban intervention.

OLIVER